



HEELING AREA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

# The Lookout

Summer 2011 Newsletter Issue

*Our mission is to preserve the history of the people who have gone before us.*

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## Wheeling Civil War Genealogy . . .

During the sesquicentennial of the Civil War, many people focus on their Civil War roots. For those from what is now West Virginia, those roots may well include ancestors on both sides of the conflict.

Wheeling was a hotbed of activity during the early months of the conflict. Two days after the April 12, 1861 firing on Fort Sumter, President Lincoln issued a nationwide call for 75,000 troops for three-months service. The very next day, thirty men from Wheeling enrolled in a Union Guard, and by May 10 an entire unit, the First Virginia Infantry, mustered into service. The names of those who enlisted can be found on the WAGS website at: <http://www.lindapages.com/wvcw/1wvi/1wvi-appenda.htm>. Many of those men served out their three-months obligation and then reenlisted for three years. Those in the three-year service of the First Virginia/West Virginia Infantry can also be found on a WAGS website at: <http://www.lindapages.com/wvcw/1wvi/1wvi-appendb.htm>. An entire history of the unit, including these rosters, is at: <http://www.lindapages.com/wvcw/1wvi/1wvi.htm>



On May 17, 1861, just one week after the First Virginia Infantry mustered in, Daniel Shriver recruited a Confederate company. Known as the "Shriver Grays," the company became part of the Stonewall Jackson Brigade. It's said that the men convinced a local tailor to make suits for them for a secret wedding, making him pledge secrecy. They then provided gray cloth, and the "wedding suits" became Confederate uniforms. A roster of the Shriver Grays and a brief history of the unit are on the WAGS website at: <http://www.lindapages.com/wags-ohio/shriver.htm>

Our Homepage: [www.lindapages.com/wags-ohio/index.htm](http://www.lindapages.com/wags-ohio/index.htm)

Our email: [wagswv@gmail.com](mailto:wagswv@gmail.com)

Recent immigrants and others who lived and worked in the mills in Centre and South Wheeling were almost exclusively pro-Union. However, many of the old-line families of Wheeling felt loyalty to Virginia and so favored the South. A convention in Richmond supported secession if the majority of voters agreed. The vote was taken on May 23, 1861, and secession of Virginia was approved, despite that fact that most voters west of the Allegheny Mountains voted against it. A list of "Traitors in Wheeling" (<http://www.lindapages.com/wags-ohio/traitors.htm>) identified those who voted for secession. On that list were such prominent names as Zane, Hullihen, Sweeney, Riley, Phillips, and Steenrod.

The Special Census of 1890 is a good source of names of men who served in the war (almost all Union), survived the war, and lived in Ohio County at the time of the census. Widows are also listed. The census, along with many other Civil War links, can be found at: <http://www.lindapages.com/wags-ohio/index.htm>

While soldiers were enlisting and mustering into service, delegates met in Wheeling to debate the future of the western counties of Virginia. The First Wheeling Convention was held on May 13-15, 1861, shortly before the statewide secession vote. Delegates to that convention are listed at: <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/delegateswc1.html>. A brief summary of the convention, including a link to the proceedings can be found at: <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/statehood05.html>. The second convention began in Wheeling on June 11. That story can be followed at: <http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/statehood07.html>.

Other suggested sources for Civil War era genealogy include Ohio County census records, particularly those for 1860 and 1870, and Wheeling City Directories. These are not online but can be found in hard copy in the Wheeling Room of the Ohio County Public Library.

An invaluable online source is the Vital Records Research website of West Virginia: [http://www.wvculture.org/vrr/va\\_select.aspx](http://www.wvculture.org/vrr/va_select.aspx). Birth, death, and marriage records are available at no cost for every county in the state. Available years vary from county to county. As of this writing, Ohio County birth records include the years 1820 and 1853 to 1910; death records go from 1853 to 1970; and marriage records are included from 1790 to 1970.

For those interested in general Civil War information and histories, a search online can produce a number of period books with expired copyrights that can be downloaded free of charge. Sites such as Google Books (<http://books.google.com/>) and iPad resources such as iBooks and Free Books offer a wide variety of such books.

**WAGS Beginner's Genealogy Classes has begun . . .** The Society has begun offering beginner level introduction workshops to genealogy at the Ohio County Public Library. We are off to a good start.

The classes are about one hour long and will be offered on the odd numbered months of the year. They will alternate from beginning the third Tuesday



evenings and Saturday mornings. These options will give most people a chance to work their own schedules to allow them the opportunity to experience the starting of a lifetime pursuit. This is a great opportunity for people to get acquainted with good direction in the discipline of genealogy; see what the Ohio County Public Library has to offer and become WAGS members.

All classes are held in the basement of the library. The class being offered is being repeated throughout the year. It is not a series of classes at this point, but additional classes are under consideration. Our WAGS contact for this project is Doug Breiding. **There has been some changes to the dates for the classes from our previous Newsletter.** The following is an updated listing of dates for the year 2011.

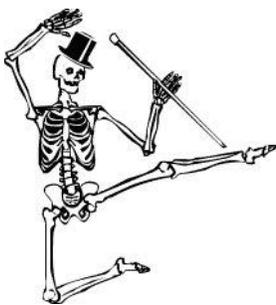
July 16, 2011 at 10:00am - Sept. 10, 2011 at 10:00am  
- Nov. 17, 2011 at 7:00pm



### **The WAGS Cemetery Project . . .**

As was discussed at the July WAGS monthly meeting, we will begin to transcript all interments of all cemeteries in Ohio County. This project is to finally have in one computer file all names and information of the deceased no matter which cemetery there are laid to rest. We need as many volunteers as possible for this project because this is a huge undertaking.

If you can help with the project please contact Doug Breiding ([deacondougbreiding@gmail.com](mailto:deacondougbreiding@gmail.com)). We will have a full detailed article in the next addition of the Fall WAGS Newsletter. A computer is not needed for some tasks to this project.



**If you cannot get rid of the family skeleton, you may as well make it dance.**

~ George Bernard Shaw ~

Every family tree has its sap.

There once was a man who paid a genealogist \$500.00 to look up his family history ... then paid another \$1,000.00 to keep quiet about it!

People who depend on their family tree for status should shake it first.

**From the WAGS President . . .**

Doug Breiding

*I would like to thank all of you for your words of kindness and encouragement as the President of WAGS. Sometimes I feel a bit overwhelmed with all the elements involved in this organization, but it's been a good ride so far! I truly am excited about our Cemetery Project. I have a passion for Cemeteries, as do many of you. My heart just goes out when I see neglect and those that have gone before us in some remote area seemingly forgotten.*

*Working with those responsible for the area's cemetery is to be looked at as a partnership as a group willing to help with a common goal in mind. Truly, we're all in this together! Next issue of the Newsletter will have a complete showing of all cemeteries in Ohio County. I was not able to get all the information I wanted for cemeteries by this issue. Thanks for your patience.*

*I ask that we encourage others to be involved with WAGS. I remember when I started with WAGS there was no pressure to sign up for any projects. I slowly worked into being involved and I wish for that to be the experience of our newest members. No pressure. However, I would like to always make sure that we have a current listing of project, so when someone does want to get involved, they can pick what interested them the most. If we are to survive as an organization, we need to be mindful of getting new members.*

*Hope you're having a great summer.*

## WHEELING AREA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Membership in the Wheeling Area Genealogical Society is \$10.00 per individual for the year from January 1 to December 31. Membership includes the newsletter, *LOOKOUT*, published in March, June, September and December. Back issues of the membership year will be mailed on receipt of dues. Queries .50¢ a surname to no-members, free to members. Meetings are 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month at 1:00pm at the Ohio County Public Library, Wheeling WV. There is NO December meeting. Make checks payable to WHEELING AREA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, P.O. Box 6450, Wheeling WV 26003-6450

### PLEASE PRINT THE BELOW INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street

Mailing Address (if different from above): \_\_\_\_\_

City State Zip

Home Phone: \_( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my check for \$10.00 \_\_\_\_\_ Check one:  NEW  RENEWAL